

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-25 are rejected.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 16, and 21 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found, at least on in the paragraph beginning on line 27 of page 12 of the specification.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12, 14-16, 18, 19, 21, 23 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by “RFC 2866”. With respect to amended claim 1, the cited art fails to anticipate, teach, or suggest “creating a unique session identifier for a user, wherein the unique session identifier is created by one of a plurality of network access servers; and the unique session identifier is created in a manner that prevents more than one of the network access servers from creating a same unique session identifier.”

In the rejection of the previous version of claim 1, the Office Action cites sections 1.2, 2, and 5.5 of RFC 2866. These sections recite, in part:

“Each service provided by the NAS to a dial-in user constitutes a session, with the beginning of the session defined as the point wherein service is first provided and the end of the session defined as the point where service is ended. A user may have multiple sessions in parallel or series if the NAS supports that, with each session generating a separate start and stop accounting record with its own Acct-Session-Id.” (Section 1.2, definition of “session”).

“When a client is configured to use RADIUS Accounting, at the start of service delivery it will generate an Accounting Start packet describing the type of service being delivered and the user it is being delivered to, and will send that to the RADIUS Accounting server, which will send back an acknowledgement that the packet has been received.” (Section 2)

[The Acct-Session-Id] attribute is a unique Accounting ID to make it easy to match start and stop records in a log file. The start and stop records for a given session MUST have the same Acct-Session-Id. An Accounting-Request packet MUST have an Acct-Session-Id.” (Section 5.5).

These above-quoted sections of RFC 2866 describe that a NAS can provide services to dial-in users in the form of sessions, and that each Accounting-Request packet must have an

Acct-Session-Id. The Office Action appears to be equating the Acct-Session-Id with the unique session identifier recited in claim 1. In contrast to amended claim 1, however, the cited sections of RFC 2866 neither teach nor suggest that the Acct-Session-Id is created in such a way that no more than one of a plurality of network access servers can create the same Acct-Session-Id. Instead, the cited sections of RFC 2866 simply state that, for a given NAS, each session will have its own Acct-Session-Id. For at least this reason, RFC 2866 fails to teach “creating a unique session identifier for a user, wherein the unique session identifier is created by one of a plurality of network access servers; and the unique session identifier is created in a manner that prevents more than one of the network access servers from creating a same unique session identifier,” as recited in amended claim 1.

Furthermore, these sections of the RFC also fail to teach or suggest an arrangement in which the Acct-Session-Id is provided to an Authentication, Authorization, and Accounting (AAA) module that receives AAA processing requests from each of several network access servers. Instead, the cited sections of RFC 2866 simply describe a scenario in which a single NAS interacts with an RADIUS Accounting server. The cited sections of the reference neither teach nor suggest a situation in which multiple NASes interact with the same RADIUS Accounting server. For at least this reason, RFC 2866 fails to teach or suggest a method that involves “providing the unique session identifier to an Authentication, Authorization, and Accounting (AAA) module, wherein each of the network access servers is configured to request AAA processing from the AAA module,” as recited in claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, as are dependent claims 3-4. Claims 6-12, 14-16, 18-19, 21, and 23-24 are patentable over the cited art for similar reasons.

It is further noted that the cited art would not be expected to teach or suggest a system in which a unique session identifier created in such a way that no more than one of a plurality of network access servers can create the same Acct-Session-Id. As noted in the background sections of Applicants’ specification, existing systems (e.g., as illustrated in FIGs. 1A and 1B of Applicants’ specification) operated in situations in which it is “possible for the AAA server 30a to receive n session id values, where each of the n session id values corresponds to a different

NAS 28 but is the same number [emphasis added]. The AAA server 30a can easily handle this condition because the AAA server 30a associates each session id value with the corresponding NAS 28 based upon a unique NAS address for each NAS. Because each of these duplicative session id's is coming from a different NAS address, the AAA Server 30a can distinguish between the NAS's 28a-28n when managing the sessions involved." Specification, p. 10. Thus, existing techniques were available to handle the situation in which multiple network access servers communicated the same session identifier to the same AAA server. None of the cited art expresses any need for the feature recited in amended claim 1, in which the unique session identifier is created in a manner that prevents more than one of the network access servers from creating a same unique session identifier.

Nevertheless, in the Response to Arguments section of the Final Office Action, the Examiner states, in view of the description of prior art systems in the specification of the present application:

"the prior art teaches that the AAA server is able to distinguish which NAS or network access server the session ID is coming from based on the NAS's address even though the session ID is the same. Therefore, each session between the AAA server and the corresponding NAS is unique because the AAA server can delineate between the NASes. Therefore, the Applicant's admission strengthens the Examiner's position that generating a unique session identifier which is unique to a plurality of access servers exists in the prior art. Therefore, this limitation as claimed cannot be the basis for patentability." Final Office Action, page 3 (emphasis in original).

The Examiner appears to be concluding that, because an AAA server could distinguish among multiple copies of the same session identifier by delineating among the different NASes, the prior art necessarily teaches providing a unique session identifier. However, such a conclusion is not supported by the actual teachings of the cited art. While the AAA server described in the background section of Applicants' specification may be able to distinguish among sessions, that does not mean that the AAA server has been provided with a unique session identifier. In other words, the fact that each session is unique (as emphasized by the Examiner) has nothing to do with whether a unique session identifier has been provided to an AAA module. Instead, as clearly described in the background sections of Applicants' specification, it simply means that the AAA server has a mechanism to differentiate between sessions that are identified by the same session identifier. Thus, the background sections of Applicants' specification, both

alone and in combination with the cited portions of RFC 2866, clearly does not teach providing a session identifier, which is created in a manner that prevents more than one of the network access servers from creating a same unique session identifier, to a AAA module, as recited in claim 1.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over “RFC 2866.” This claim is patentable for at least the foregoing reasons provided above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 2, 7, 13, 17, 20, 22 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over “RFC 2866” in view of Applicant’s admitted prior art. These claims are patentable reasons similar to the foregoing reasons provided above with respect to claim 1.

Further with respect to amended claim 2, the cited art neither teaches nor suggests that “creating the unique session identifier further comprises appending a unique identifier to a local session identifier,” as recited in amended claim 2.

The Final Office Action states that it would have been obvious “to append a unique identifier associated with an access server to a local session identifier since ‘RFC 2866’ suggests that any sort of method of generating a unique session identifier may be used.” Final Office Action, p. 12. The Final Office Action also states: “The generation by a NAS of a unique session identifier by appending a unique identifier such as the NAS address to a local session identifier such as the session ID or a port as noted previously by the Examiner would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art since the NAS is aware of these identifiers and, since the prior art teaches that the NAS provides a session ID to the AAA server, appending a known identifier to another known identifier in order to produce a unique session identifier would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.” Office Action, pp. 12-13.

In both of the above assertions, no portion of the cited art is cited as teaching or suggesting that it would be desirable or useful to create a unique session identifier by appending a unique identifier to a local session identifier. The basis of the rejection appears to be the mere fact that the cited art discloses a session ID and a NAS address. There is no suggestion within

the cited art to perform the affirmative act of appending one identifier to another, nor has any convincing line of reasoning been provided as to why one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the teachings of the art to perform such an affirmative act. Applicant notes that the mere fact that one identifier could be appended to another in no way provides any suggestion that the act of appending one identifier to the other be performed.

Accordingly, the Office Action's statements appear impermissibly rely on the level of skill in the art to provide a suggestion to modify the references to teach the invention in the absence of any reference that suggests such a modification. "To imbue one of ordinary skill in the art with knowledge of the invention... when no prior art reference or references of record convey or suggest that knowledge, is to fall victim to the insidious effect of a hindsight syndrome wherein that which only the inventor taught is used against its teacher." *W.L. Gore & Assocs., Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1553, 220 USPQ 303, 312-13 (Fed.Cir.1983). "To support the conclusion that the claimed combination is directed to obvious subject matter, either the references must expressly or impliedly suggest the claimed combination or the examiner must present a convincing line of reasoning as to why the artisan would have found the claimed invention to have been obvious in light of the teachings of the references... [S]implicity and hindsight are not the proper criteria for resolving the issue of obviousness." *Ex Parte Clapp*, 227 U.S.P.Q. 972, 973 (Bd. Pat. App. & Int'f 1985). Since the cited art neither teaches nor suggests the act of "appending a unique identifier to a local session identifier," claim 2 is patentable over the cited art. Claims 7, 13, 17, and 22 are patentable over the cited art for similar reasons.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5087.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 14, 2006.

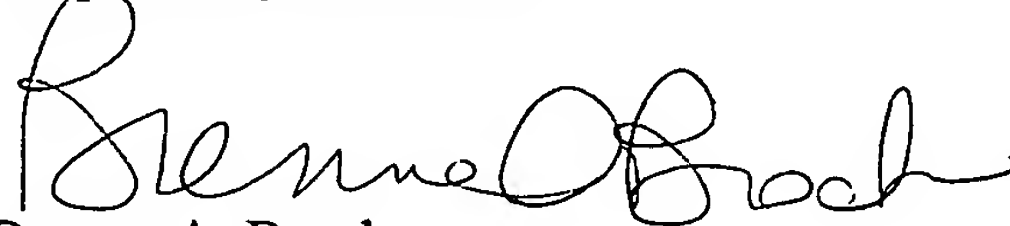


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